

UPI

12 March 1981

UPI39

A W

AM-SOVIETOIL 3-12

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY THURSDAY SURRENDERED TO A CONSUMER GROUP A SECRET REPORT ON ITS PROJECTIONS FOR SOVIET OIL PRODUCTION RATHER THAN FIGHT A COURT SUIT UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

"THIS IS A VICTORY WITHOUT A SHOT BEING FIRED," SAID EDWIN ROTHSCHILD, DIRECTOR OF THE ENERGY ACTION CONSUMER GROUP THAT WENT TO FEDERAL COURT LAST WEEK TO OBTAIN THE CIA SOVIET OIL REPORT.

"WE JUST HIT THEM ACROSS THEIR BOW WITH A LAWSUIT AND THEY CAPITULATED. MAY THE REST OF OUR POLITICAL BATTLES BE AS EASY," HE SAID. "I THINK THE ATTORNEYS AT THE CIA REALIZED THEIR CLIENT WAS GUILTY AND THOUGHT DISCRETION WAS THE BETTER PART OF VALOR."

ROTHSCHILD'S GROUP RAISED THE ISSUE BECAUSE THE CIA'S GLOOMY PROJECTIONS OF SOVIET OIL PRODUCTION HAVE BEEN USED IN THE PAST TO STRENGTHEN THE OFFICIAL ARGUMENT FOR U.S. OIL PRICE DECONTROL, WHICH THE GROUP OPPOSED.

THE CIA HAS WARNED THAT THE SOVIET UNION, THE WORLD'S LARGEST OIL PRODUCER, MAY BECOME A NET IMPORTER OF OIL BY 1985, COMPETING WITH THE WEST IN AN INCREASINGLY TIGHT MIDDLE EASTERN OIL MARKET.

THE ENERGY ACTION EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES FOUNDATION FILED A SUIT IN U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ON MARCH 4, DEMANDING DISCLOSURE OF THE SOVIET OIL PROJECTIONS.

UPI 03-12-81 08:40 PES